

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
LOK SABHA**

STARRED QUESTION NO:1

ANSWERED ON:23.11.2005

NUCLEAR ISSUE OF IRAN

Das Gupta Shri Gurudas;Krishnadas Shri N.N.

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether Iran's nuclear issue came up for discussion during the recent visit of PM to USA;
- (b) if so, the details thereof and view point of India in this regard;
- (c) whether continuous support to Iran is likely to affect the nuclear deal with USA;
- (d) whether voting against Iran on IAEA resolution is likely to create hurdles for India in oil sector;
- (e) whether the Government is aware of the protests from different political parties and eminent persons against India's vote against Iran in the IAEA board meeting along with USA and EU Nations; and
- (f) if so, the details thereof and the Government's reaction thereto?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (RAO INDERJIT SINGH)

(a) to (f) - A Statement is placed on the Table of the House.

STATEMENT REFERRED IN PARTS (A) TO (F) OF THE LOK SABHA STARRED QUESTION NO. 1 TO BE ANSWERED ON 23.11.2005 REGARDING 'NUCLEAR ISSUE OF IRAN'.

(a)-(b) Iran's nuclear issue came up for discussion with leaders of USA, Russia and China during the recent visit of Prime Minister to New York in September 2005. Views were exchanged on the issue of Iran's nuclear programme and the consultations in progress at the IAEA in Vienna at that time. The Prime Minister conveyed the importance of engaging in intensive diplomatic efforts to evolve an international consensus on this issue.

(c) The civil nuclear cooperation understanding between India and the US, set out in the Joint Statement issued during the July 2005 visit of Prime Minister to USA, was in the context of India's quest for energy security as an essential component of our vision for our development. The Joint Statement recognises that as a responsible State with advanced nuclear technology, India should acquire the same benefits and advantages as other such States. Reciprocity is key to the implementation of all the steps enumerated in the Joint Statement and all our commitments have been fully reflected in the Joint Statement. We expect a close correlation between the actions to be taken by the United States and India. Iran's nuclear programme is not mentioned in the Joint Statement and is completely unrelated to that issue.

(d) Iran is aware of our approach on this matter and discussions have since been held on this subject between the two countries including by the then External Affairs Minister and the Vice President of Iran in Moscow on 26 October 2005. There are no grounds for any apprehension of an impact on our energy security due to India's vote at the IAEA.

(e)-(f) Government has taken note of the views expressed by political parties and individuals on India's vote at the IAEA board meeting in September 2005. India seeks to find a way to reconcile Iran's need for nuclear energy for its development with the international community's concern over proliferation. India's vote in favour of the resolution in IAEA took into account our view that more time should be given for the IAEA Board to take a decision as we felt that the matter should not be referred to the UN Security Council at that time. This was reflected in our Explanation of Vote, which stated that: We are opposed to the matter being referred to the UN Security Council at this stage, because we did not believe that this was justified in the circumstances. Our support for the resolution, despite our reservations, is based on the premise that the intervening period will be used by all concerned to expand the diplomatic space to satisfactorily address all outstanding issues. India supports keeping the door open for dialogue and consensus and avoidance of confrontation. We are hopeful that in the coming days, we would be able to help find a way to reconcile Iran's need for nuclear energy for its development with the international community's concern over proliferation.